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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

AGDA-A (M) (2 Mar 71) FOR OT UT 71B015

10 March 1971

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: MG A. E. Milloy, CG, 23rd  
Infantry Division, Period 22 March 1970 to 23 November 1970 (U)

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1. Reference: AR 1-26, dated 4 November 1966, subject: Senior Officer  
Debriefing Program (U).

2. Transmitted herewith is the report of MG A. E. Milloy, subject as  
above.

3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized  
from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in  
accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 1-26; however, it should not be  
interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of  
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4. Information of actions initiated under provisions of AR 1-26, as a  
result of subject report, should be provided to the Assistant Chief of  
Staff for Force Development, ATTN: FOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt  
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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

VERNE L. BOWERS  
Major General, USA  
Acting The Adjutant General

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as

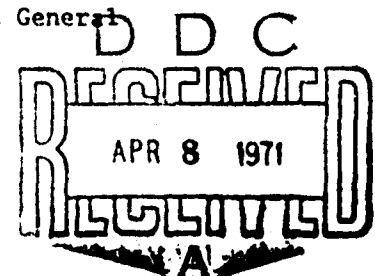
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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AVHDC-DO

9 FEB 1971

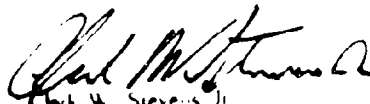
SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report - MG A. E. Milloy

Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development  
Department of The Army  
Washington, D. C. 20310

1. Inclosed are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report prepared by MG A. E. Milloy. The report covers the period March through November 1970 during which time MG Milloy served as Commanding General, 23rd Infantry Division.
2. MG Milloy is recommended as a guest speaker at appropriate service schools and joint colleges.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl  
as (trip)  
2 cy wd HQ DA

  
Carl W. Stevens Jr.  
Capt. AGC  
Assistant Adjutant General

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**APO SAN FRANCISCO 96349**

AVII-DCG

15 December 1970

**SUBJECT: Senior Officers Debriefing Report**

Commanding General  
Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam  
ATTN: AVDO-DO  
APO ( IN COUNTRY ) 96375


**1. References:**

a. Ltr, Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, AVHAG-PO, subject as above, dtd 23 August 1969.

b. Ltr, Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, AVHAG-PO, subject as above, dtd 15 November 1970.

2. In accordance with paragraph 2, AR 1-26 and paragraph 5a, USARV Regulation 1-3, the senior officers debriefing report covering my tenure as Commanding General, 23d Infantry Division (22 March 1970 through 23 November 1970) is hereby submitted.

1 Incl  
as

  
A. E. MILLOY  
Major General, USA  
Deputy Commanding General

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Country: Republic of South Vietnam

Debrief Report By: Major General Albert E. Milloy

Duty Assignment: Commanding General, 23d Infantry Division (Americal)

Inclusive Dates: 22 March 1970 to 23 November 1970

Date of Report: 15 December 1970

1. (C) Operational Environment: a. The 23d Infantry Division's tactical area of interest encompasses Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces. Terrain in the area ranges from the multi-canopied, dense undergrowth mountains in the west, to the piedmont and coastal lowlands in the east. The majority of the area is mountainous jungle presenting significant obstacles to employment of military forces while at the same time providing sanctuaries for the enemy. Commitment of sufficient military forces to totally eliminate enemy presence in the area, assuming he has a desire to remain, would be impractical. Therefore, the terrain in the two provinces provides a tactical advantage to enemy forces. A terrain analysis is at Inclosure 1.

b. Population: Ninety-five percent of the one million Vietnamese in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces reside in the coastal lowlands which comprise only 15 - 20% of the total land mass. As support of the people is the critical factor for any insurgent force, the concentration of the population in the lowlands provides a tactical advantage to allied forces. Security problems are less difficult and the goal of developing RF/PF forces for population security, while allied forces engage enemy main force units to the west, can be more easily attained.

c. Forces: In addition to the 23d Infantry Division, the 2d ARVN Division, Provincial Forces (RF/PF) and six Border Defense Ranger Battalions operate in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces. Provincial forces expanded to 83 Regional Force companies and 498 Popular Force platoons by mid-November 1970, 95% of their authorized goal. ARVN regiments were colocated with 23d Infantry Division brigades and were assigned to operate in the same areas of tactical responsibility.

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2. (C) Enemy Forces: a. Organization, Command & Control: All of the enemy forces in the 23d Infantry Division TAOI come under the command and control of VC Military Region 5 (MR-5), the military and political headquarters of the North Vietnamese Communist Party in the coastal provinces between DaNang and Cam Ranh Bay. MR-5 answers to Hanoi for military orders and to COSVN for political direction. This corps-level headquarters controls four forces within the 23d Infantry Division TAOI. The largest of these is the 2d NVA Division, with its three subordinate regiments, the 1st MF, 21st NVA, and 3d NVA, operating in both Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces. The division also supports activities of the VC provincial troops in the area. Each of the two VC provinces takes direction from MR-5 and controls a number of battalion and company-sized units which operate in AO's within the VC established provincial boundaries which do not coincide with GVN boundaries. Districts within a province operate under provincial control and maintain several company and platoon-sized units inside their boundaries. Those echelons below district level maintain guerrilla units.

(1) The fourth organization of note is the Chu Lai Front. This unit, composed of the 78 MF Rocket Bn, the 401 MF Sapper Bn, and three LF companies, is specifically targeted against the Chu Lai area and the combat base itself. Like the provinces and the 2d NVA Division, Chu Lai Front is subordinate to Military Region 5.

(2) The region also has a number of separate battalions which operate in the 23d Infantry Division TAOI. These battalions, special purpose units such as sapper, reconnaissance, or heavy weapons units, are normally placed under the operational control of major subordinate organizations.

(3) Reinforcements for enemy units opposing the 23d Infantry Division could come from any of three areas: The 3d NVA Division, also subordinate to MR-5, moved south into Binh Dinh Province in February - March 1970, and could relocate to the north. Front 4, another major MR-5 element, has a number of regiments and separate battalions subordinate to it and operates north of the 23d Infantry Division AO in Quang Nam Province. Additionally, units staged in Laos could be used to reinforce the 2d NVA Division.

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b. Armament: Arms and equipment used by the enemy forces is largely dependent upon the type unit. North Vietnamese Regular Army units are armed much as any other regular army unit, with small arms, automatic, and anti-tank weapons. Mortars and rockets comprise the indirect fire capability of these units, and heavy machine guns provide an anti-aircraft capability. There have been some indications of 85mm artillery pieces in one 2d NVA Division Support Battalion, and anti-aircraft weapons along the Laotian border.

(1) Main Force and Local Force battalions are equipped with the same types of weapons normally found in an NVA unit of equivalent size, although there are usually fewer crew-served weapons. Heavy weapons battalions employ mortars and rockets for indirect fire.

(2) Local Force companies and platoons, on the other hand, are limited in crew-served weapons. An entire district unit of several companies and platoons may rely on one mortar and B.O. rockets for indirect fire support. Small local units are, however, relatively well equipped with AK-47s or carbines.

c. Logistics and Transportation: Enemy units opposing the 23d Infantry Division receive supplies over a complex network of trails and waterways from North Vietnam into the northern and western borders of Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces. Capillary trails branch from the primary arteries into the coastal lowlands. These feeder trails are used to supply enemy units with food from the coastal lowlands, and with arms and equipment from the west. Two transportation regiments, the 230th and 240th, are responsible for moving supplies through the AO, although individual unit supply is accomplished by transportation sections organic to tactical units. Movement of supplies is by means of manpack or bicycle, supplemented by use of sampans when the navigable waterways are available. Although some motorized traffic has been noted in the past near the Laotian border, there has been no evidence of such activity recently. Resupply is rapidly becoming a serious problem for the enemy. Arms and equipment coming from NVN through Laos are vulnerable and are suffering from allied interdiction. Food supplies, on the other hand, must come primarily from the local area, or be self-produced. Tactical resource denial operations, pacification programs, and herbicide crop destruction has forced the enemy units to operate farther and farther from the local

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population, thus making it increasingly difficult to obtain food from local sources. Realizing that it cannot feed its subordinate units from its own resources, MR-5 has required each subordinate element to become almost wholly self-sufficient. This requirement has forced the already under-strength enemy units to divert a substantial portion of their efforts to food production. From all indications, even this extreme measure has not solved the food shortage problem.

d. Communications: Enemy communications units rely heavily on runners, since radios and telephones are scarce, especially in local units. The 230th and 240th Transportation Regiments have several battalions whose primary function is to guide replacements into the area and to provide communications and postal service.

e. Strategy and Tactics: From March to September 1970 the enemy's primary strategy appeared to be to disrupt the GVN pacification program, using Viet Cong Local Forces as the basic tool. NVA and MF units, while having the same mission, engaged US and ARVN forces in an attempt to preclude support of the GVN pacification program. These diversionary attacks were normally launched against objectives in the piedmont areas, in terrain that afforded the most advantage to the attacking force, providing them with cover, concealment, and ready routes of withdrawal. Ideally, the objectives selected would draw US/ARVN forces physically as far from the lowlands as possible. Once the diversionary attack has been launched, the VC Local Forces in the lowlands are expected to attack the RF/FF OP's and villages left exposed by the withdrawal of US/ARVN units from the area. The major failing in this strategy has been the inability of the enemy local forces to exploit any advantage gained by the NVA/MF diversion. Logistical problems and allied fire power have made the maneuvering of large enemy troop units impractical, if not impossible, and have caused a recent change in VC/NVA tactics. The major strategy remains disruption of the GVN Pacification Program, however, emphasis has shifted largely to sapper and guerrilla tactics. There are indications that large units, both VC and NVA, have been fragmented to provide reinforcements for province-level units and to establish closer ties between NVA units and province.

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f. Intelligence Activity: The enemy's intelligence effort is based on exploitation of the local population. Reconnaissance units are trained in methods of extracting information on allied units from the population. Other methods include the tracking of units, exploitation of material left in night defensive positions, monitoring of radio transmissions and the exploitation of indigenous personnel employed on allied bases.

g. Psychological Aspects: The combat effectiveness of the majority of the enemy units has decreased substantially since March. The most important factors in this decline are logistical, as discussed earlier, and psychological difficulties. Replacements from North Vietnam are disillusioned by the differences between what they see, and what they have been led to expect. Most of them are young and impressionable, making them more susceptible to low morale. In addition intelligence reports have consistently indicated a decay in the morale and effectiveness of leaders.

h. Summary: Since March 1970 the enemy has shown a steady decline in effectiveness. Logistically, he has been unable to consistently resupply himself with either food or equipment and to mass the food supplies necessary for prolonged operations. Psychologically, many of his soldiers are young, inexperienced and disillusioned. Tactically, he has been unable to mold the Local Forces and guerrillas into a consistently effective offensive force. Further, from all indications, these difficulties can be neither quickly nor easily corrected, without external reinforcement.

3. (C) Concept of Operations: a. The 23d Infantry Division conducted extensive operations, in conjunction with the 2d ARVN Division and Provincial Forces, to find, fix and destroy NVA, VC Main Force and Local Force units while concurrently providing for the defense of key US installations and conducting pacification operations in designated areas. During the dry season, large scale operations were conducted in the western portions of Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces to engage and destroy enemy units, to interdict his lines of communications, and to destroy his logistical bases and command and control facilities. In the lowlands, during both the dry season and the monsoon season, emphasis was placed on small unit operations, ambushes, and security measures to deny the enemy access to the population. All operations were supported by artillery, air strikes and a large scale psychological

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warfare program. To assist the GVN in winning the support of the people through economic development, civic action projects originating at the request of the people were undertaken. Large scale engineer efforts were planned and executed in the areas of land clearing and road construction. Through the use of the Combined Unit Pacification Program, provinces were assisted toward attainment of GVN established pacification goals.

b. To insure full coordination of allied operations, weekly meetings were held at both provinces and a monthly RD meeting at 2d ARVN Division Headquarters. The meetings were attended by key commanders and staff officers (US, ARVN and Province). Current and future operations were discussed. Staffs at all levels were in communication on a daily basis and counterpart commanders met frequently by informal visits.

4. (C) Operations: All division operations during the report period were executed with a view toward Vietnamization and assisting local GVN agencies and ARVN units to strengthen their control of the two provinces. Combined operations with ARVN and RF/PF units were encouraged with the majority of participating forces being Vietnamese. This is evident in the following examples of some of the operations conducted:

a. Tactical Operations:

(1) Hiep Duc: In late April 1970 intelligence indicated that an enemy force would move towards the Hiep Duc area in an attempt to disrupt pacification efforts. Phase I of the Hiep Duc operation, lasting from 30 April-22 May 1970, started early in the morning of 30 April with enemy mortar and ground attacks against LZ Siberia and LZ Karen as the enemy moved into the village of Hiep Duc. The following day, a combined US/ARVN operation was initiated with three ARVN battalions and one US battalion being combat assaulted into the Hiep Duc area to engage elements of the VC 1st Main Force Regiment. The scheme of maneuver was for the US battalion to search and clear areas south, southwest and east of Hiep Duc, while the ARVN units swept through Hiep Duc from the north, then continuing clearing operations to the west and northwest. To facilitate control, the 5th ARVN Regiment and later the 6th ARVN Regiment located their headquarters on LZ West where, in addition to the headquarters elements, a joint fire direction center was formed to control all supporting fires in the area.

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(a) On 18 May, Task Force 1-1st Cavalry, consisting of two armored cavalry troops and two infantry companies, was committed to the battle. The Task Force moved from the east towards Hiep Duc with the mission of driving the enemy into a blocking force formed by the ARVN regiment. Phase II of the operation began on 23 May with the combat assault of one US infantry battalion into the outskirts of Hiep Duc. Both units were added to the operation in reaction to agent reports and intelligence indicators of a renewed offensive by the 1st Main Force Regiment from the northwest, reinforced by elements of the 3d NVA Regiment from the southeast.

(b) The scheme of maneuver for Phase II was for US forces to search and clear southeast of Hiep Duc, meeting the threat of the 3d NVA Regiment. The 5th ARVN Regiment was replaced by the 6th ARVN Regiment, with the latter being assigned the mission to search and clear north and west of Hiep Duc to meet the threat from the 1st Main Force Regiment. The battle continued until 15 June when the enemy units broke contact and withdrew from the area. A map showing major maneuver units is at Inclosure 2.

(c) The Hiep Duc battle proved to be the last attempt by a major enemy unit to take and hold an area in the 23d Infantry Division TAOR. Intelligence reports received after the battle disclosed that the 1st Main Force Regiment has been badly damaged and rendered combat ineffective. This is substantiated by the results of the operation reflecting 1075 VC/NVA KIA. Since the end of the Hiep Duc battle, the regiment has been inactive.

(d) Termination of the Hiep Duc battle in mid-June also signaled a more rapid return to guerrilla warfare by the enemy units. The trend continued through November with contacts being primarily meeting engagements with small groups and characterized by the enemy breaking the contact almost immediately.

(2) Operations Elk Canyon I and II: Operations Elk Canyon I and II in the western portion of Quang Tin Province were conceived by the I ARVN Corps and 2d ARVN Division with the intention of exploiting enemy supply problems by operating astride their main logistical network into Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces. Both operations were jointly planned by 2d ARVN and 23d Infantry Division. 2d ARVN Division provided the majority of maneuver forces.

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(a) On 12 July 1970 the 6th ARVN Regiment and one battalion of the 196th Brigade initiated Operation Elk Canyon in the Kham Duc area. Battalions were combat assaulted into the Kham Duc airfield and old Special Forces Camp area, with the mission of destroying enemy base areas, lines of communication and command and control facilities. The airfield was repaired and 23d Infantry Division Forward Support Elements deployed to support the operation. Airlift and gunship support was provided by the 23d Infantry Division on a daily basis to support units operating throughout the area. (See map at Inclosure 3.)

(b) On 26 August Elk Canyon I terminated with the extraction of units from Kham Duc and the repositioning of units for Elk Canyon II. This operation was targeted against the K7 Corridor Complex containing logistical trails and rear service elements. The concept of the operation, as shown on the map at Inclosure 4, was for three battalions of the 5th ARVN Regiment to sweep south and southeast from vicinity Highway 534 toward two battalions of the 196th Infantry Brigade operating in a mobile blocking force role northwest of Fire Bases Judy and Mary Ann. One battalion of the 5th ARVN Regiment was inserted west of the K7 Complex to sweep east along the Dak Rose Trail, a major enemy logistical route. Operation Elk Canyon II was terminated on 19 September in preparation for the approaching monsoon season and allied units were withdrawn to the east.

(c) Allied reservations concerning the worth of the operations were substantiated by the fact that no major contact was made and large caches were not found. On the positive side, however, a major enemy logistical network was interdicted for a significant period of time. Secondly, the ARVN commanders were required to participate in combined planning for the operation to develop the detailed logistical and airlift support that was required. They derived invaluable training from this. Results of the two operations are shown at Inclosure 5.

(3) Operations from September to November 1970: With the termination of operations in the western portion of the AO and withdrawal of 2d ARVN and 196th Brigade forces to the east, the 23d Infantry Division shifted emphasis to resource denial operations. Although resource denial is a continuing operation, the major rice harvest in October required particular

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attention be paid to exploiting VC/NVA logistical problems discussed in paragraph 2 above. Joint planning between 2d ARVN Division and 23d Infantry Division for the Fall-Winter Campaign (30 Sep 70 to 28 Feb 71) called for extensive rice denial operations against known enemy avenues of ingress and egress to the lowlands and against known cache areas. Emphasis was on small unit operations, saturation patrolling and ambushes to deny access to the populated areas and necessary foodstuffs. 23d Infantry Division battalions established liaison with districts, and brigades with provinces, to identify heavy production areas, routes of transportation for harvested crops, and storage areas. Provinces were encouraged to establish effective resource control measures such as mobile and static checkpoints on primary and secondary roads and on waterways, and security for storage areas. Success of the tactical operations in support of the resource control program is attested to by the 575 tons of foodstuffs captured by the end of the reporting period as compared to 431 tons for all of 1969. Even more important, the enemy was denied the opportunity to collect large amounts of rice in the first place.

(4) Operational Techniques: The three organic air cavalry troops were employed under division control to more fully employ their capabilities and extend the division's influence into the western portions of the TAOR where maneuver battalions did not operate. They performed missions of visual reconnaissance to establish contact with the enemy, develop and exploit intelligence and to interdict known enemy locations. When a maneuver unit made contact, an air cavalry troop was normally employed in direct support.

(a) To support tactical operations and further deny the VC/NVA freedom of movement, the division introduced the use of the mechanical ambush as an offensive weapon on 1 April 1970. Use of the mechanical ambush increased the density of combat power throughout the division's tactical area of responsibility and enabled units to increase the number of night ambushes without increasing the number of soldiers in the field. By the end of the report period, mechanical ambushes accounted for 359 enemy eliminated, 6 captured and 90 individual weapons captured. Battalions operating in the lowlands averaged 15 to 18 manned ambushes per night with an equal number

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of mechanical ambushes employed.

(b) To provide units with the capability to engage VC/NVA soldiers at a distance, in a clandestine manner, a division sniper school was started on 29 March 1970. The objective was to train sufficient snipers to have a nine-man squad organic to each battalion (squad leader and four sniper teams). By the end of the report period, 85 snipers were employed in the field and had eliminated 116 VC/NVA. Probably the most valuable benefit was derived from the intelligence reported by the sniper teams.

b. Crop Destruction/Defoliation Operations: Difficulties encountered in obtaining food supplies from the lowland areas forced enemy units to resort to maximum use of self-production in areas in the western portions of the AO. To further exploit their supply problem, a crop destruction/defoliation program was initiated against isolated rice crops, garden plots, etc. During the period March to September, chemical personnel of the division, utilizing the helicopter-mounted AGAVENCO spray apparatus, conducted 148 crop destruction missions, spraying approximately 28,000 acres of enemy crops with 36,000 gallons of herbicide. An estimated 70 - 90 percent of the crops within the target areas were destroyed. The crops consisted of 80 percent rice, 15 percent manioc, and 5 percent corn, potatoes and other hard crops. Intelligence reports indicate that the spraying was effective not only from a logistical point of view, but tactically as combat soldiers were diverted from operations to protect crops and engage spray aircraft.

c. Land Clearing: Land clearing operations were conducted for the purpose of denying the enemy staging areas and sanctuaries to allow friendly forces to maneuver in areas which had been cleared of mines and booby traps, and to allow resettlement of the areas by the Vietnamese people.

(1) Land clearing operations in Quang Ngai Province, in the vicinity of Mc Duc, were conducted from 15 May to 15 Aug 70. A total of 3,685 acres were cut. Four hundred and twenty-nine bunkers, 1,805 meters of tunnels and 144 mines or booby traps were destroyed. In discussions with province and district advisors, they cite the following: Previously,

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many areas were so heavily mined and booby trapped that friendly forces could not operate. Since completion of the clearing operations, friendly units now maneuver in the area and approximately 8,000 Vietnamese have been resettled.

(2) Batangan land clearing operations in Quang Ngai Province began 15 June and are still in progress. Through November, approximately 16,840 acres had been cleared. One hundred and twenty-eight bunkers, 5,290 meters of tunnels and 53 mines and booby traps were destroyed. Two villages, Guim Dien, pop. 3,000; and Mai Lai (1), pop. 2,000 have been resettled. There has been a definite decrease in the size of enemy forces and intelligence reports indicated that land clearing operations reduced the enemy operational areas and, in some cases, necessitated withdrawal of their forces. The Senior Province Advisor from Quang Ngai singled out the land clearing operation north of the eastern section of route 521 as permitting the permanent opening of route 521 from Quang Ngai to My Lai (1). This contributed to a 15% reduction in the price of fish and rice in the two villages.

d. Road Construction (Secondary & Farm Roads): This program is enthusiastically received by the Vietnamese people because of the farm to market aspects of economic development. Specifically, the road construction program is intended to improve land lines of communication, restore lesser road networks, support the development and pacification program, and to stimulate national economic growth and unity. Tactically and politically, use of the improved roads permits greater maneuverability and demonstrates the strength of GVN by their continued presence in all areas. Secondary dry weather roads totalling 243 km have been programmed for construction in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces over the next three years. Of this total, 42 km have been completed and 45 km are presently under construction. Of the 155 km of farm to market roads programmed for construction, 23 km have been completed and another 45 are under construction.

e. Psychological Operations: The psychological operations program in the division was designed to support both US and GVN operations and made a significant contribution to the success of the allied effort. Three of the major programs, Chieu Hoi, Rice Denial, and Volunteer Informant were especially effective. Analysis of results of the programs established a correlation between the amount of psychological operations conducted and the results attained.

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Emphasis was on supporting the GVN 1970 Pacification and Development plan, separating the VC and VCI from the local populace, and strengthening the image of GVN in the eyes of the local populace. To ensure a coordinated PSYOP effort throughout the TAOR, the following procedures were coordinated with Vietnamese agencies or implemented by the division: VIS agreed to broadcast Chieu Hoi programs over the local radio stations in addition to increasing other activities; 2d ARVN Division assisted the 23d Infantry Division in the writing of PSYOP leaflets; the division processed 20 missions per day from the 2d ARVN Division to check their targets against our targeting system and to ensure no duplication of effort. Targeting of specific groups, individuals and units was emphasized with the thrust of the messages relating to specific local incidents or conditions. A total of 2,818 ralliers turned themselves in during the period 1 Jan - 30 Nov 70.

f. Civic Action: Civic Action activities in the 23d Infantry Division TAOR were conducted with the primary objective of improving the standard of living of the Vietnamese people and promoting a basis for future self-sufficiency. Both provinces in the division TAOR were asked to submit a list of civic action projects to be accomplished with assistance from the 23d Infantry Division. The projects emanated at hamlet and village level, were reviewed at district level and approved, and consolidated and assigned a priority by province. All approved project requests were incorporated into a division operations order which assigned projects to the major subordinate commands in whose AO they were located. These projects were to be completed using GVN materials from the province warehouse, when available, and Vietnamese labor as practicable. US assistance was limited to technical supervision and provision of materials which would otherwise not be available through Vietnamese channels. This plan centralized control of Civic Action projects within the TAOR and made possible a concerted Civic Action program between US and GVN authorities. Additional projects were not to be undertaken unless approved by province and incorporated into the overall plan. Medical Civic Action Programs (Medcap) continued to be avidly received by the Vietnamese people and the programs received continuous emphasis from all subordinate commands of the division. The road program has been discussed earlier.

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### 5. (C) RVNAF/GVN Operations: a. Tactical Operations:

(1) The 2d ARVN Division continued to make substantial progress during the report period. Perhaps bolstered by the success of the Kham Duc area operation, there was a definite increase in morale, confidence, and offensive spirit. The latter was demonstrated by a continual desire to take the fight to the VC/NVA through operations in the western portions of the AO, combat assaults, Eagle flights, and use of LRF teams. The progress was reflected in the increase in enemy eliminated and weapons captured, and use of artillery, tactical air and helicopter gunship sorties. It should be noted, however, that this was not at the expense of pacification efforts, as operations in support of the GVN Pacification Program also increased. This was made possible through a decrease in use of maneuver elements on security missions. The 2d ARVN Division leadership is aggressive and mission oriented, particularly at the senior officer level. Given time for progress in developing necessary combat support and combat service support capabilities, the 2d ARVN Division should continue to progress toward complete self-sufficiency as a combat unit.

(2) Provincial forces in Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces continued to expand in strength. Their ability to control geographical areas, secure the population, and vital locations increased. This is particularly true in Quang Tin Province. Recently conducted surge operations were encouraging from an operational point of view. The Province Chief, Colonel Tho, personally planned and coordinated four surge operations during the months of August through November. Each surge operation was initiated when intelligence reports indicated an enemy attack was imminent, and the maximum number of provincial RF and PF units were employed. The surge operations in August and September lasted three and four days respectively with the 1-1 Cavalry Squadron, 23d Infantry Division, providing a reaction force and the division providing helicopter support. A third surge operation in late October lasted for seven days and involved a US brigade, the cavalry squadron, an ARVN regiment, and all RF/PF units in the province. A fourth surge operation in November lasted for 10 days, included essentially the same forces, and the results were as significant as the previous operations. Results are at Inclosure 6. Of special note is the increase in the amount of time RF/PF

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forces actually spent in the field on each operation. This is significant because an offensive attitude is being developed as opposed to the outpost security missions normally performed by RF/PF units in the past. A summary paper on the first surge operation (Hiep Dong I) published by the Quang Tin Province Chief is at Inclosure 7. Surge operations are being planned in Quang Ngai Province, patterned after those conducted in Quang Tin. Colonel Loi, who until recently commanded the 5th ARVN Regiment and participated in the Quang Tin surge operations, has assumed the position of Province Chief and the division is optimistic that equally dramatic results may be realized in Quang Ngai Province.

b. 23d Infantry Division Support: The assets of the 23d Infantry Division, consistent with operational requirements, were made available to 2d ARVN Division and provincial forces. Aviation support was probably the largest contribution to their operations. UH-1's were provided daily, on a dedicated basis, to both provinces, 2d ARVN Division headquarters, and each ARVN regiment for purposes of command and control and resupply; CH-47's were provided for cargo airlift and artillery moves. In line with the desire to turn over operations to Vietnamese forces (within their capabilities) they received an equal distribution of aircraft support for combat assaults, eagle flights, long range reconnaissance patrols and troop extractions. In instances where there was not enough aircraft support for requested offensive operations of both Vietnamese and US, the Vietnamese forces were given priority. In the field of intelligence and counterintelligence, it was policy to provide direct support whenever possible by providing information collected by division resources directly to the GVN organization involved. In other words, the objective was to supply timely intelligence directly, to insure that individuals who could best be exploited by GVN agencies were promptly turned over to these agencies to make maximum use of any information they possessed that was of immediate tactical value.

6. (C) Vietnamization: a. General: The Vietnamization Program was part of all operations conducted by the division and was one of the first considerations during planning. In general, the term Vietnamization can be used to describe any action taken that furthers the goal of Vietnamese self-sufficiency and lessens the role of the United States in the conduct of the war. In that

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regard, many of the efforts of the division have already been discussed — combined operations, land clearing, road construction, and civic action. Training is also of major importance to Vietnamization and is discussed below. Special attention should be directed, however, to the effects of both combined planning and operations. Although difficult to measure, there is substantial benefit derived from the association of Vietnamese and US officers particularly when a joint plan or operation is involved. They assimilate a great deal by participating in our planning and observing our operational techniques. We make a special effort to involve them in as much combined planning as possible.

b. Training: One of the major efforts of the division Vietnamization Program was in the field of training. Inherent in the Vietnamese assumption of responsibility for conduct of the war is the need to be proficient in all aspects of combat, combat support, and combat service support. The following is a summary of training conducted by the division to assist them toward this goal.

(1) The division participated directly in leadership training for the Regional Force officer with the conduct of a Combat Leadership and Orientation Course by the 23d Infantry Division Combat Center. This course is designed to teach junior RF officers the leadership principles and techniques necessary to enable them to command a platoon or company effectively. The course was first conducted during May 1969 and has continued since that time. Seven hundred and sixty-two officers (RF) from 5 provinces and 2 sectors of Military Region I completed the course. In addition to enhancing the tactical proficiency of the RF officers, it has helped promote a mutual understanding between the RF soldier and the 23d Infantry Division soldier. Fifty-seven hours of artillery forward observer training was incorporated in the course to give RF units the capability of employing indirect fire weapons.

(2) Training for the 2d ARVN Division was conducted in the use and employment of mechanical ambushes. In addition to instruction by the infantry brigades, a mobile training team from the Division Combat Center provided instruction to ARVN cadre at the 2d ARVN Training Center, thus giving them the capability of conducting further training on the subject within their division.

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(3) The 23d Infantry Division Support Command supports a medical training program conducted by the 23d Medical Battalion for medical corpsmen, dental technicians and optometry assistants from the 2d ARVN Division Medical Battalion. During November 1970, DISCOM initiated QJT training for 55 personnel from the ARVN 1st Area Logistics Command in the technical fields of motor vehicle, signal and engineer maintenance.

(4) The 23d Infantry Division Artillery conducts continuing Field Artillery Radar Operator Training classes for personnel from the 2d ARVN Division Artillery. Additionally, instruction has been provided on the Integrated Observation System and on forward observer procedures, fire support planning, air mobility, M101A1 howitzer section crew training, and a FADAC operators course.

(5) Weapons and Equipment: An example of training in sophisticated equipment is the activation of sensor fields in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces. ARVN personnel were trained by US Target Mission Force personnel in the use of sensors; fire missions or other appropriate reactions are now regularly called on sensor activations using solely ARVN assets. Joint training was also conducted on mine sweep operations, and in August 1970, districts along QL 1 assumed responsibility for the daily mine sweep.

(6) Other training included tactical subjects, sling loading for CH-47's, chemical instruction on use of fougasse, and supply specialist training.

7 (C) Conclusions and Recommendations: The success of Vietnamisation is dependent on many factors to include the speed of withdrawal of US forces, whether the low level of activity with existing forces will continue or whether the enemy will take the offensive with reinforced units, and the ability of the Vietnamese training base to sustain their acceptance and employment of sophisticated equipment and weaponry essential to the defense of the country. The current situation in the 23d Infantry Division area of operations is encouraging, but problems do exist and solutions must be found.

a. Unity of effort of all Vietnamese forces in the 23d Infantry Division TAOI is essential. Currently, the 2d ARVN Division, provincial forces, and six border defense ranger battalions operate in almost autonomous roles. To insure a combined effort against the enemy, there must

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be more coordination, exchange of information and more positive centralized direction. Immediate solutions to start the process toward the combined effort would be placing the border defense ranger battalions under the operational control of the 2d ARVN Division and the establishment of joint ARVN and province tactical operations centers.

b. Establishment of an effective logistical and maintenance base for support of combat units is critical to SVN forces being able to assume full responsibility for conduct of the war. While lack of qualified Vietnamese to train in use of the more sophisticated equipment is a problem that can only be solved in the long run, many of the lesser skills can be developed through OJT training. To this end, immediate steps should be taken to identify those skills that US units could provide to ARVN and provincial personnel through the auspices of an intensive OJT program.

c. One of the factors which contributes to the current effectiveness and aggressiveness of ARVN and territorial forces is extensive support by US Army aviation units in the form of gunships, medevac and aerial observation. VNAF helicopter support in the two southern provinces of MR1 has been limited to troop lift on a very small scale and on an 8 to 5 o'clock-fair weather basis. Some way must be found to develop a VNAF capability and willingness to provide more versatile and timely support to the ground forces on at least a modest basis.


d. As is well known, RVNAF is plagued by a critical dearth of leadership at the lower levels of command. What is not apparently fully appreciated in all quarters, however, is the fact that every single item of sophisticated equipment issued to RVNAF exacerbates this problem. The operator and the mechanic for such equipment come from the same woefully inadequate pool of talent that supplies the potential NCO and junior officer to the infantry, artillery and cavalry units. In my view, we should devote our energies and attention towards convincing RVNAF that they can get along without manning some of the more sophisticated items of equipment which we have in the US Army, particularly in the target acquisition field.

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e. Although the problem is largely political and well known to the military here in the Republic of Vietnam, withdrawal of US units should proceed at a pace consistent with the Vietnamese capability to accept the responsibility for conduct of the war in the area to be turned over. To rapidly withdraw units based solely on a political decision could cause our efforts through the years to have been in vain.

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A. E. MILLOY  
Major General, USA  
Commanding

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## TERRAIN

1. General. The Americal TACR can be divided into the following geographical regions:

a. Coastal Lowlands. The coastal lowlands are characterized by relatively flat, poorly drained areas of rice cultivation. The width of the coastal plain varies from approximately one kilometer south of DucPho to 27 kilometers north of Quang Ngai City and the average elevation is less than 10 meters. In the north are found sand dunes of up to 40 meters and isolated knolls and hillocks of up to 110 meters while the area between the Tra Bong River and the Song Tra Khuc River in Quang Ngai Province has an average elevation of 20 meters with isolated hill masses of up to 180 meters. To the south of the Song Tra Khuc River some relief is provided by isolated hillocks ranging in elevation from 50 to 70 meters.

b. Piedmont. The lowlands gradually rise to the west to form a series of foot hills with elevations averaging 100 meters in the north and center of the AO, and increasing to elevations of up to 650 meters in the south. The piedmont zone is highly dissected with slopes of 20 to 70% (average 35%) and has mixed vegetation pattern consisting of multi-canopied, dense undergrowth forests and brushwood.

c. Mountains. The foothills grade into the steep, rugged, heavily dissected Annamite Mountains in the west. The mountains, generally are oriented in a northwesterly to southeasterly direction but much of the AO is marked by a random orientation, with heavy compartmentalization. Elevations increase from east to west reaching elevations of over 2000 meters near the Laotian border in the central portion of the AO where slopes vary from 25 to 100%. In the north, elevations vary from 300 to 1100 meters with 40 to 60% slopes in the south elevations vary from 650 to 1000 meters with 30 to 40% slopes. The entire mountainous portion of the AO is characterized by heavy stream and river dissection and the vegetation cover is typically marked by multi-canopied, dense undergrowth forests interspersed with small areas of brushwood, grassland and bamboo.

d. Waterways. The major waterways all have their source region in the Annamite Mountains and are generally located in the western, central and southern portion of the AO. The most important of these are the Song Thu Bon/Song Tranh in the west, the Song Tra Bong and the Song Tra Khuc/Dak Drinh in the center and the Song Re and Song Ve in the south. All are navigable to shallow draft craft during most of the year.

2. Observation and Fields of Fire.

a. Coastal Plains. The region does not afford ground elevations or relief suitable for excellent ground observation and commanding fields of fire are fairly good, except as limited by man-made features (buildings, rice paddy dikes) and domestic vegetation in urban areas. Aerial observation and fields of fire are excellent, except as similarly restricted.

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b. Piedmont. Aerial and ground observation and fields of fire are fair to good. The area is characterized by brushwood-covered, rolling hills and plains, except in the western elevation where terrain is increasingly more rugged and complex. In the western portion, moderate undergrowth forest mingles with brushwood, and fields of fire are restricted to open areas or places of light undergrowth. Both aerial and ground observation become limited as westward movement progresses.

c. Mountains. The Americal portion of the Annamite Mountains has extremely irregular and complex topography. Most of the region is covered by dense undergrowth forest with several layers of canopy. Vegetation is less dense along some higher elevations and along valleys and streams. Aerial and ground observation and fields of fire are poor, with the exception of areas of light vegetation where they are poor to good.

### 3. Cover and Concealment.

a. Coastal Lowlands. Cover and concealment is generally poor throughout, with the exception of urban areas. Limited individual cover is provided by revetments formed by rice paddy dikes. Concealment from aerial observation is poor except in urban areas.

b. Piedmont. Brushwood and moderate undergrowth, combined with rolling hills and small plains, provide poor cover and fair concealment from ground and aerial observation. Where overhead canopy is discontinuous and covering terrain is unmasked, cover and concealment are poor.

c. Mountains. Except in scattered clearings, concealment from all types of observation is good. Cover afforded by trees is fair and when coupled with terrain irregularities is considered good to excellent.

### 4. Obstacles.

Coastal Plains. Trails and highways are subject to destruction or interdiction by fire/ground action at choke points. Overland trafficability is generally good, except in riceland areas and during the monsoon transition period when tropical storms inundate the lowlands and traffic is restricted to improved, high-crown roads.

b. Piedmont. Trafficability is fair to good for foot mobile forces, but poor for wheeled and tracked vehicles due to terrain gradients and vegetation density. During tropical storms, trafficability is poor and is restricted to improved routes and trails.

c. Mountains. Dense undergrowth and steep, irregular gradients combine to limit traffic and restrict vehicle mobility to improved trails and routes. Trail and route trafficability is poor for both foot and vehicle movement during period of extended precipitation and tropical storms.

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5. Key Terrain. Higher elevation in the piedmont and mountain highlands dominate valley areas and lines of communication. In the coastal plains, key terrain features are rivers and streams navigable to sampans and piroques; urban areas; and routes and trails which remain trafficable during periods of extended precipitation or inundation.

6. Avenues of Approach. Axes of ground advance favor foot, light vehicle, sampan, and piroque transportation. In the western reaches of the Americal AO, aerial approaches are restricted by bad weather resulting from the Southwest Monsoon. Tracked vehicular movement is generally limited to the coastal plains and wheeled vehicles to the lowland and piedmont areas over existing routes. The major highways include National Route QL 1 (3.5 - .8 meters, asphalt-concrete, all-weather); Communal Routes HL 535 and HL 533 (Tien Phuoc Highway) (3.5 meters average, stabilized earth, fair weather); HL 529, HL 515, HL 516, HL 518, QL 14 (3 - 6 meters, stabilized earth, fair weather, interdicted); and Interprovincial Route LTL 5B (4 - 6 meters, stabilized earth, fair weather, interdicted).

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ANTENNA VALLEY

HIEP DUC

US

ARVN

US

ARVN

HIEP DUC

SIBERIA

US

US

KAREN

1

MAP 1:100,000  
SERIES VIETNAM L607  
SHEET 6640  
OPERATIONS OVERLAY  
HIEP DUC 22



MAP 1:100,000

SERIES VIETNAM L607

SHEETS: 6539 6540 6639 6640

OPERATIONS OVERLAY

ELK CANYON 1 & ELK CANYON 2

ELK CANY

ELK CANYON 1

IRENE

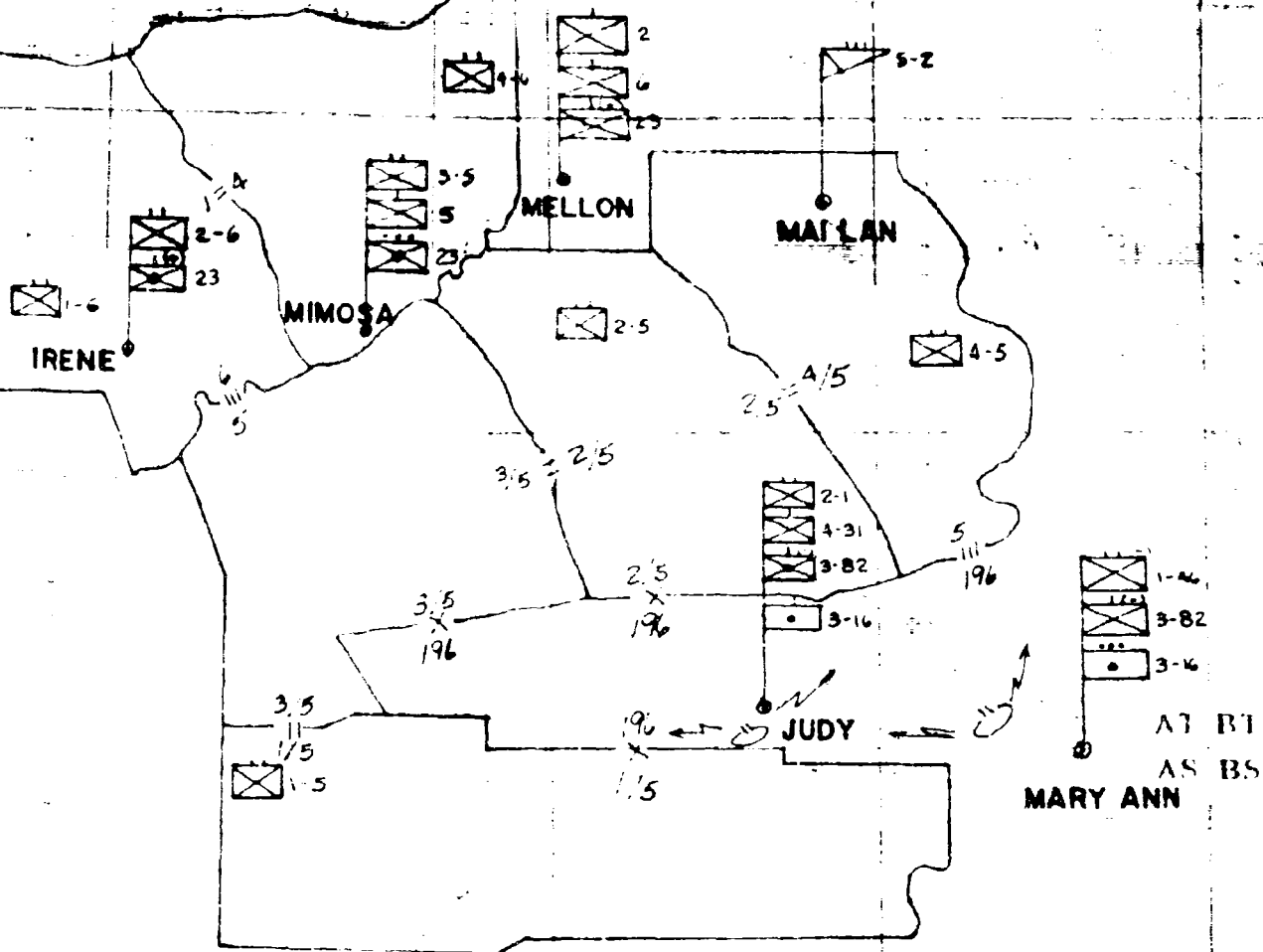
KALA

KHAM  
DUC

DAK ROSE

3/5  
1/5  
1-1

ELK CANYON 2



2

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## COMBAT RESULTS

### ELK CANYON [MATERIAL CAPTURED]

	Phase I		Phase II	
	ARVN	US	ARVN	US
1. <u>CSM</u>	9	11	1	1
2. <u>IN</u>	80	36	49	19
3. <u>AMMO (RDS)</u>				
SA	20 TONS	9,000	400	1144
82mm	1077	71	-	-
60mm	1200	61	18	-
122mm	156	-	-	-
140mm	20	-	-	-
85mm	14	-	3	-
RPG	268	16	10	-
MMG	2250	2818	-	103
RPG	153	12	-	-
H/GREN	50	170	89	1
EXPLOS	150 KGS	200 LBS	-	-
MINE	-	34	-	-
4. <u>COMMO</u>				
RADIO	1	-	UNK AMT	2
PHONE	10	-	-	-
WIRE (M)	51,050	-	1,000	200
BATTERY	-	40	-	-
TELEGRAPH KEY	1	-	-	-
5. <u>TRANSPORTATION</u>				
BICYCLES	258	1	-	-
BICYCLE PARTS	-	150	-	10
CARTS	80	-	-	-
6. <u>FOOD</u>				
RICE	20 TONS	4 BAGS	2,000 LBS	115 LBS
FOODSTUFFS (CORN)	-	UNK AMT	2,000 LBS	1955 LBS
7. <u>MEDICAL</u>				
MALARIA PILLS	-	13,000	-	-
OTHER ASST PILLS	-	-	9,100	-
8. <u>COMPLEXES</u>				
HOSPITALS	3	-	-	-
DISPENSARIES	-	1	-	-
BASE CAMPS	-	1	1	2
MISC	-	-	-	-

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	<u>Phase I</u>		<u>Phase II</u>	
	ARVN	US	ARVN	US
9. <u>OTHER</u>				
STRUCTURES (DEST)	379	26	215	79
BENCH LATHE	1	-	-	-
B-C	-	-	-	-
B/T FACTORY	-	-	-	1
<u>FRIENDLY</u>				
KYA	24	5	9	33
WIA	122	87	18	35
MIA	-	-	-	-
<u>ENEMY</u>				
KYA	195	86	71	35
PW	1	-	5	1
CD	2	-	-	-
HC	-	-	-	-

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## RESULTS OF SURGE OPERATIONS IN QUANG TIN PROVINCE

### HIEP DONG I [14 Aug 70 - 16 Aug 70]

FRIENDLY LOSSES			ENEMY LOSSES		
	RF	PF		RF	PF
KIA	4	2	KIA	25	91
WIA	9	8	CIA	24	19
WPNS (INDIV)	2	0	WPNS (INDIV)	25	3
WPNS (CRWSD)	0	0	WPNS (CRWSD)	2	2
			HOI CHANH	3	13

### HIEP DONG II [10 Sep 70 - 30 Sep 70]

	RF	PF		RF	PF
KIA	4	1	KIA	209	121
WIA	8	1	CIA	23	8
WPNS (INDIV)	0	0	WPNS (INDIV)	57	44
WPNS (CRWSD)	0	0	WPNS (CRWSD)	5	1
			HOI CHANH	21	70

### HIEP DONG III [19 Sep 70 - 29 Sep 70]

	RF	PF		RF	PF
KIA	3	8	KIA	183	122
WIA	1	33	CIA	38	6
WPNS (INDIV)	0	0	WPNS (INDIV)	42	42
WPNS (CRWSD)	0	0	WPNS (CRWSD)	0	1
			HOI CHANH	15	61

### HIEP DONG IV [20 Nov 70 - 3 Dec 70]

	RF	PF		RF	PF
KIA	4	2	KIA	66	103
WIA	7	6	CIA	16	9
WPNS (INDIV)	0	0	WPNS (INDIV)	46	52
WPNS (CRWSD)	0	0	WPNS (CRWSD)	12	1
			HOI CHANH	7	29

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### OPERATION REPORT - HIEP DONG I, 13 - 15 AUGUST 1970, QUANG TIN PROVINCE

I. Introduction: I am pleased to fulfill General Lam's request to report on the Quang Tin provincial operation of 13-15 August 1970 which we call Hiep Dong I. 27 RF companies, 88 PF platoons, and 55 Hoi Chans participated. The area of operation included all six districts of Quang Tin with emphasis on the middle area. There were 98 objectives, of these 45 were Hoi Chan guided, and contact was made on 44. Hiep Dong I resulted in 166 enemy KIA, 43 CIA, 16 Hoi Chans, 4 crew served weapons and 48 individual weapons. Friendly losses were 6 KIA, 17 WIA, and 2 weapons lost. I would at this time like to point out the more salient aspects of Hiep Dong I.

II. Concept: The basic concept underlying the success of Hiep Dong I was a sound knowledge of both the enemy and friendly forces. How to acquire knowledge of the enemy is the single most important factor. Timely use of enemy intelligence is another critical element as most enemy information is received late. The method of getting and using intelligence from Hoi Chans and POW's is of extreme importance. Bad treatment gives bad results. We must therefore psychoanalyze the Chieu Hoi and the POW to best exploit him. His first reaction to his new environment will be pre-determined by what his VC Commander told him. To overcome this we strive to give the Chieu Hoi and POW a true understanding of what we are like. Once they freely accept this change from what they were told to what they actually see, hear, and experience, they tell us the truth. In summary, we must win their confidence first and then question them. Otherwise they are confused and we lose a good source of information. They should be questioned while they are at ease; for example, while they are eating or listening to music. Mao Tse Tung said you must use enemy weapons to fight the enemy. They are not available to us so we use the enemy to fight the enemy; that is the Chieu Hoi and the POWs. The POWs are converted into Hoi Chans to avoid conflicts with the Geneva Conventions.

The Chieu Hoi speaks the language of the VC in his area and he knows the people there. He can spot the VC's location on the map and tell us the name the VC have given that location. It is important to note that the VC use village and hamlet names that differ from ours.

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Finally, the information that the Chieu Hoi gives must be checked by comparing it with other sources. Chieu Hoi's are used as guides to make the transition from the map to the terrain. They usually go in squad size groups at night to the spot they are familiar with. The RF company group commander or platoon leader must have full confidence in the Chieu Hoi and he must be convinced to use the Chieu Hoi's tactics. The Chieu Hoi does not like to take a direct route to the target.

III. Selection of the Target Area: The province can be divided into three distinct areas:

- a. The pacification area near the coast where the enemy threat is minimal.
- b. The middle area which encompasses the coastal plain adjacent to the mountains and the eastern mountains. This area is most important because the bulk of the VCI is found there and they serve as guides for the larger local and NVA forces. The VCI also provides security for the enemy lines of communication, establishes caches, launches rocket and mortar attacks on our populated areas, and generates propaganda among the local inhabitants.
- c. The enemy rear area is of secondary importance.

IV. Friendly Forces: Our greatest weakness is coordination. In this war we have so many large and different elements that our initiative and freedom of action are severely limited. There is no unity of command because of too much diversity in GVN forces. We must therefore simplify our organization to really unify the command.

The Province Chief must personally go to his districts to coordinate his operations so the provincial staff and the districts see the importance of the mission. He cannot wait for others to coordinate; on the contrary, he must be aggressive.

All objectives must be hit simultaneously in one large area, as the VC do. This isolates the enemy and denies him mutual support and reinforcement. The VC are well dispersed so it follows that we should attack them on all fronts at the same time. Secrecy and initiative are the keys to success and the decision to attack depends upon the enemy and friendly situations. The Province Chief and his advisor go to all districts to give the warning order, and two days later the district chiefs come to province headquarters to present their attack plans. This teaches the commanders to gather and react to information, and it gives them maximum flexibility. We must not stifle the initiative of our subordinates with

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fixed lines on a map. He should be given the pride of executing his own plan. I would like now to discuss in greater detail the guiding principles that made Hiep Dong I unique.

### V. Six Operational Principles:

a. Use of Hoi Chanhs and POWs. In order to familiarize ourselves with the enemy's objectives, we are forced to use Hoi Chanhs and POWs. It is a known fact that no one knows your house as well as you do and we do not know the enemy as well as the Hoi Chanhs and POWs do. If we capture the VC and then beat or kill him, all our efforts are a total waste. All that remains is a body or a VC that will not talk. If we question a seriously wounded VC before attending to his suffering, all is lost because he is more preoccupied with himself and his well-being than with giving us truthful information.

For a Chieu Hoi to be of use to us we must consider him as a person. When he rallies he is very scared because he does not know what will happen to him. He may also be very sick. Normally he has rallied because he cannot live in the VC areas. Previously when a man Chieu Hoied he was taken to the Chieu Hoi Center, interrogated, and quickly processed, because each day there adds to the expense of running the Chieu Hoi Center. Some of the interrogators also abused the Chieu Hois because they thought they were not talking the truth. Those then are some of the reasons why we previously failed with the Chieu Hois.

In our national policy of "increase friends, decrease enemies," we must concentrate on the morale of the Chieu Hoi. We must look upon them as members of the great national family and we must help them as we help one who is stranded in the middle of a river. And finally, we must help them to rebuild their lives. If we treat them as one of our friends, they will not hesitate to give us whatever information they have and lead us to the targets we must hit. For this to be effective then, we must put all our trust in the Chieu Hoi. This trust must be passed down the chain of command until it reaches the squad which the man will be with.

b. Coordination. To unite stronger forces to fight against weaker forces it is inevitable that the stronger forces will win the battle; but, in uniting the weaker forces against the stronger, the weaker will become the stronger and therefore seize the advantage.

The Viet Cong tactic is to split their forces into small elements to enable them to avoid our superior forces. If our forces were to remain large we would be unable to make contact with the enemy. Because of this, we devised our Hiep

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Dong Campaign. In this campaign we use VC tactics against the VC. Without warning we conduct a series of coordinated small unit surprise attacks using as many different objectives as possible. This creates confusion on the enemy side and enables us to sever communications between their headquarters and smaller units. By doing this we cause the small enemy units to fight whereas before when we attacked with a large force (called Dam Bi Dong, meaning to move from side to side) the enemy simply evaded us. Because we did not realize how the enemy avoided battle, we continued to train our units to operate on a large scale.

In order to attack a series of targets throughout the province, all of the territorial forces must be called on to participate in their normal areas of operation, thus allowing for designated elements in each area to be held back as reserve forces that are employed as the situation requires. Using our forces according to the Hiep Dong scheme is also a big boost to troop morale. They sense a unity of effort that previously did not exist. A strong competitive climate is also developed which enables us to measure the capability, leadership, and drive of each element.

c. Initiative. High esprit, a zeal for combat, and initiative are essential elements of the friendly cadres. They must have a complete knowledge of both the friendly and enemy situations to maintain the will to fight. Knowledge of the friendly situation alone is a threat to self-trust, causes fear because of the unknown enemy situation, and increases the negative effect of rumors. At a time like this, the fact that RF/PF units are fully armed with modern weapons and are supported by tanks and aircraft means nothing.

In the past, the enemy even dared to come to Tam Ky in the morning to eat noodle soup and then wait for darkness to sabotage key installations; e.g. power houses and bridges, because their knowledge of our security measures made them confident. Had they not been so knowledgeable of our security measures, they would have constantly feared death from our ambushes, tanks, and air power.

We need to remind our troops of the above progress to generate confidence, initiative, and a will to fight. Then we can conduct operations successfully with company, platoon, or even squad size units, depending on the ability and initiative of individual commanders. If we can hold the battlefield and also develop initiative and strong leadership, the fighting will yield good results.

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Over-control of subordinate leaders must be avoided. They must have full authority to deal with local situations. The higher headquarters staff should assign objectives only and leave the detailed planning to be executed at the lower echelons.

d. Flexibility. The war in our country is very complex and without precedent. It is an undeclared war. It is a war with no front lines. It is a war in which the location of the enemy is unknown and tactics are mutually shared. Guerrilla warfare depends upon three basic concepts:

1. The enemy will evade our forces and only stand and fight when he feels he has a good chance to win.

2. Terrain in itself is of no value to the enemy. He concentrates on political power and fire power and will withdraw from contact to avoid prohibitive losses.

3. The enemy will select our weakest units to attack. They will attack swiftly and fight as they withdraw. This will tire our troops so we must generate enthusiasm to counter it.

In many instances, three to five-man ambushes are all that is needed to accomplish a mission. We must avoid the stereotyped situation where platoon leaders or company commanders are forced into employment of their units conventionally. The seizure of multiple objectives by a single unit working in separate elements requires an unusual degree of coordination and flexibility. The degree to which these saturation type attacks can be implemented will depend on the local situation. With this tactic, ambush patrols need not be withdrawn after being sprung provided we have a responsive reinforcement capability. We must also be flexible enough to withdraw our forces and then immediately strike back in the same location.

4. Secrecy. Sudden reaction coupled with secrecy gives us an 80% assurance of victory. The enemy constantly gains information from us by monitoring our radios, TV, troop movements, and from loose conversation. Therefore, we must keep our operation plans and tactical movements secret. This means that we do not discuss military operations or activities at tea parties or even in outside offices. It is imperative that we maintain complete secrecy while giving, receiving, and executing orders.

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f. Unity of command. Working together in harmony is just one facet of unity of command. In a broader sense it means sacrifices by unit commanders, trust among leaders, self and unit discipline, and decisiveness on the part of our cadres.

Unity of command between the GVN Army, Navy, and Air Force is facilitated by inter-service agreements, regulations, training, and common items of equipment. Achieving unity on a province level is quite different and complex due to the variety of forces which are given missions in the same area, all having different commanders and different headquarters to which they show their loyalty. In addition to the village chief with his Popular Forces and our Regional Forces, we have CIDG, PRU, NPFF, APT, Korean, American, and Thai forces to unite in multiple efforts of pacification and development and open warfare against a common enemy.

Because we have such a variety of forces in the province, it is absolutely mandatory that we appoint one overall commander for each joint operation; and that we establish priorities, aggressively coordinate, and work together towards the final victory we all cherish.

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